**Job Title:** Strategy Manager: Quality Improvement, Early Years and Childcare  

**Job Grade:** Band 7  

**Directorate:** Schools, Children and Families  

**Job Reference Number:** P00913

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**The Role**

To be responsible for the quality improvement strategy for all early years and childcare services (childminders, settings and schools) in Essex, including meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Ofsted Care Standards, and promoting associated quality improvement frameworks and activities.

**Job Purpose**

To strategically line manage relevant projects, initiatives and staff both directly and through Area Quality Improvement Teams to ensure clear focus on addressing under performance, improving outcomes for all relevant children and especially for narrowing the gap for the lowest performing children, including supporting inclusion, equality and parents as first educators.

**Key Accountabilities**

- Deputise for the Head of Early Years and Childcare as necessary;
- As part of the senior management team within the Early Years and Childcare area, support the Head of Early Years and Childcare with strategic planning and service development and contribute to overall priority setting for budgets and resources;
- Set the budget priorities and oversee expenditure in relation to area of responsibility so as to achieve agreed objectives;
- Line manage, providing direction, performance management review and professional development support for relevant directly managed staff and provide mentoring and professional guidance for other relevant staff in the relevant areas of work including use of central systems and record keeping;
• Contribute towards building and sustaining effective partnerships through the Children’s Trust Approach with and between partner agencies also providing services to children, including the private, voluntary and community sectors, in order to focus resources jointly on improving outcomes for children and young people, which must include safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

• Reporting to the Head of Early Years and Childcare, propose and lead decision making with regard to the key responsibilities of the post;

• Report regularly to DCSF and other relevant national partners, the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the Children’s Trust and contribute to relevant monitoring for the Children and Young People’s Plan, the LAA and other reports as appropriate;

• Undertake any other relevant duties in line with the grading for the post as may be reasonably required in the future.

• To be responsible for the quality improvement strategy for all early years and childcare services (childminders, settings and schools) in Essex, including meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Ofsted Care Standards, and promoting associated quality improvement frameworks and activities

• Lead the Early Years and Childcare strategy with regard to quality improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encompassing, aligning and ensuring delivery of all relevant activity (such as work plans, partner activity etc) and initiatives aimed at children 0-5 (such as ECAT, CLLD Pilot etc),

• In relation to the EYFS and other childcare for children aged 0 to 14 (16 with special needs), ensure provision of data interrogation, challenge, support, self-evaluation, general and targeted training, development, research, coaching and mentoring activities and other strategies focused on improving outcomes for children (NI72 and NI92 in particular) in schools, pre-schools, full daycare, children’s centres, out of school care, childminders, and relevant un-registered/voluntary register provision such as crèches.

• In relation to EYFS and other childcare, ensure the range of services above has a particular focus on engaging with vulnerable groups and on promoting particular strategies for improving their outcomes, including through working with parents

• Be responsible for the local authority’s strategy to sustain improvement with regard to relevant Ofsted outcomes in all schools and other relevant settings including both EYFS and the care standards
• Lead for the Early Years and Childcare Service within the SIEY Advisers forums reporting regularly on progress, and ensuring coherence with the Primary Strategy in particular

• Lead an integrated and coherent strategy for the promotion of the EYFS and the National Children’s Bureau national Quality Improvement Principles (QIP) across all relevant maintained and non maintained schools and settings, leading to an Essex “RAG” rating system that is embraced locally by all sectors

• In relation to children’s centres support the delivery of effective EYFS support via the Qualified Teacher requirement, providing professional support and development to ensure they are kept up to date with current strategies and approaches, and ensure coherence with the overall EYFS strategy and broader future development of the QIP agenda.

• Lead with regard to partner contracts in relation to ensuring coherent EYFS delivery and support including support and challenge with regard to best practice

• Ensure Early Years Consultants (EYCs) and Development Officers (DOs) contribute, as appropriate to their sectors and roles, to the collection of local knowledge and to the development of relevant services to ensure childcare sufficiency is delivered (supporting the relevant audit and data management function to be delivered elsewhere within the service)

• Ensure the delivery of a coherent inclusion and equality strategy across the whole quality agenda of Early Years and Childcare including providing line management of the Outreach and Inclusion Manager

• Ensure, through all activities, a coherent approach to the engagement with parents as part of the quality agenda for early years and childcare services

• Be responsible for ensuring delivery of support, challenge and quality improvement for those settings and sectors on the Voluntary Childcare Register (such as crèches, nanny registers and out of school childcare settings for children over eight) either directly or through procurement of services from relevant partners

• Ensure that all Early Years Consultants and Development Officers (both ECC and Partners) are able to provide first level advice and guidance with regard to generic issues such as Business Support, Safeguarding, other aspects of the “common core”, information services for parents etc and be able to sign-post to more specialist levels of advice and support.
To strategically line manage relevant projects, initiatives and staff both directly and through Area Quality Improvement Teams to ensure clear focus on addressing under performance, improving outcomes for all children and especially for narrowing the gap for the lowest performing children including supporting inclusion, equality and parents as first educators

Line manage four Quality Improvement Area Team Leaders, delivering directly managed Early Years Consultants (EYCs) and Childcare Development Officer (DOs), and providing coordination, direction and focus of work for other partner EYCs and DOs (for example Area SENCOs, voluntary sector Pre-school and Childminding Development Officers and Out of School Development Officers, Children’s Centre QTs, Leading EYFS Teacher Mentors etc)

Line manage the Outreach and Inclusion Manager, providing a coherent outreach and inclusion strategy across all early years and childcare settings including children’s centres, especially to support the narrowing of the gap between the lowest 20% achieving children and all children.

Line manage a Service Development Manager to ensure high level coordination of all relevant strategies and activities and a clear focus on data-led activity to improve outcomes through coordination of directly managed staff, partners and others as relevant

Ensure line management of specific projects such as the CLLD pilot, ECAT, relevant LAA initiatives etc as appropriate over time to ensure impact and coherence with all relevant strategies.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

A teaching qualification, degree, QTS.

Significant senior leadership experience (headship, sustained senior leadership, board level).

Record of continuous, successful continuing professional development.

Ofsted trained (desirable).

SIP accreditation (desirable).

Record of successful school improvement.

Proven ability at leadership and management of large teams.
• Experience in making sound, well informed judgements on the basis of qualitative and quantitative information.

• Experience, knowledge and understanding of good Early Years Foundation Stage practice.

• Experience in performance management.

• Experience of collaborating and working within National strategies and LA structures.

• Competent user of ICT.

• The ability to motivate and lead teams.

• Application of skills and training in a variety of contexts and environments.

• To hold children as our top priority and work to improve outcomes for all children in Essex.

• Good interpersonal skills.

• Ability to write and deliver training to a variety of audiences.

• Ability to facilitate and manage change.

• Willingness to seek solutions.

• Pursues challenging questions, probes explanations where necessary to gain accurate information.

• Ability to identify key issues accurately and prioritise.

• Has a high expectation of self and others.

• Highly motivated, enthusiastic strategic leader.

• Able to give accurate feedback, both written and oral.

• Able to initiate and deal with challenge and manage conflict where necessary.

• Able to receive and act on feedback about own performance.
• Able to promote and manage change.
• Keen to keep learning and keep up to date with educational agendas.
• Ability to work in partnership with colleagues from a variety of agencies.
• Car driver with access to vehicle for work use.
• Able to work occasional evenings and weekends.

Values and Behaviours

Customer Focused & Proactive
Working together we proactively engage with our customers and listen to their needs in order to continuously improve our service

• Develops and delivers effective systems that enable the delivery of a quality customer service
• Uses customer insight to create an environment where customer service is valued, recognised and seen as a priority
• Proactively engage with our customers to deliver innovative and exceptional service.
• Make decisions that are mutually beneficial to the customer and the authority
• Use customer feedback to understand “what good looks like” to improve service delivery & measure performance
• Identify key measurable targets to continuously improve customer satisfaction

Enabling & Empowering
Working together, we provide confidence and trust to support the delivery of the right services for our customers.

• Creates an environment that promotes self-development, openness and innovation
• Delegate effectively in order to achieve greater empowerment and accountability within set clear parameters
• Create a culture through personal behaviours that promotes inclusion
• Demonstrates an understanding of the political environment and makes decisions / takes action appropriately
• Communicates openly with others to improve levels of understanding and engagement
**Effective & Efficient**
Working together we will achieve our objectives in the best possible way, so that we deliver the results that make the biggest difference to the people we serve.

- Continually seeks new ways to introduce best practice in order to reduce duplication, bureaucracy and waste
- Develop and implement new ways of working to stretch performance, improve efficiency and deliver value for money
- Empowers others to innovate and challenge current practices
- Takes ownership for the implementation of corporate initiatives to help deliver change and continuous improvement

**Safeguarding**
Essex County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

**Pre-Employment Checks appropriate to this Job Profile**
Essex County Council (ECC) is committed to ensuring all recruitment is undertaken fairly, effectively, safely and in accordance with legislation.

The information below provides pre-employment screening guidance for candidates applying to this job at Essex County Council.

**Role Requirement:**
Not working with children or vulnerable adults and with no access to sensitive information relating to children or vulnerable adults

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Employment Check</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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| **References**       | A minimum of two employer references will be required-one of which must be the last employer.  
*Any gaps of 4 weeks or more will be explored by the manager at interview stage. Where appropriate additional character references will be taken up* |
<p>| <strong>Medical</strong>          | All new recruits and employees whose role changes significantly are required to complete a medical health questionnaire |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility / Right to work in the UK</th>
<th>Proof is required and original documentation will be sought i.e. passport or full birth certificate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Regulatory qualifications and professional registration (subject to role)</td>
<td>Original qualification certificates and proof of registration with a professional body are required (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Declaration (Spent and unspent convictions)</td>
<td>A declaration of spent and unspent convictions must be completed by employees who work with vulnerable adults or children</td>
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